

Student Learning Outcomes Committee
Department/Program Assessment Results Report

Department/Program: Business Administration

Degree MBA

Date Submitted 2/15/07

I. Drawing upon the goals and objectives contained in the department/program student learning assessment plan, what was the focus of the department's student learning assessment for the past academic year?

The assessment focused on the following two GOALS and their respective associated Student Learning Objectives.

GOAL 2: Develop an awareness of the domestic and global economic, legal, ethical, and technological environment in which managers make and implement decisions.

SLO 2.1: Identify and critically analyze salient legal and moral business issues.

SLO 2.2: Evaluate the impact that changes in the domestic and global economic environment have on the business climate.

SLO 2.3: Analyze the impact that technological and product innovations have on the competitiveness of firms.

GOAL 3: Gain insights into the behavior of individuals and groups in organizations and the potential influence of culture and demographic diversity.

SLO 3.1: Identify similarities and differences between the national and international environment and cultures and analyze the need to modify business strategies to pursue opportunities in new markets.

II. What information was collected, how much, and by whom?

The assessment program examined whether the Theme courses at the College of Business met Goals 2 and 3 and the associated Learning Objectives. The assessment program gathered data from three sources: faculty evaluation of a portfolio of key student projects from these theme courses, student reflections on their personal projects in this portfolio, and student surveys regarding the theme courses at the COB that address Goals 2 and 3.

The "Theme" classes evaluated are as follows:

- Interpersonal Skills [IDS 705; MGT 669; MGT 721; MGT 725; MKTG 763]
- Legal, Ethical [ACCT 681; FIN 604; FIN 659; MGT 626; MGT 722; MGT 740; MGT 742]
- Management of Technology [IDS 680; IDS 688; IDS 691; IDS 754; MGT 731; MKTG 761; MKTG 768; MKTG 770]
- Globalization [ACCT 661; FIN 654; IDS 744; IDS 753; MGT 671; MGT 710; MGT 723; MKTG 769]

BA Portfolio Project

During the Spring semester, 2005, Ken Marino, the Director of CBA's Graduate School of Business, randomly selected 10 students from among the full-time cohort MBA group (completing the second semester of their first year) to take part in the portfolio project. Five students were able to participate in the project. A meeting/luncheon was held between the graduate committee members and the selected students prior to the end of that semester. Each committee member was asked to act as a mentor/advisor to a student. The committee members met with the students regularly starting the Fall semester, 2005, and guided them through the data collection process.

Committee member Heather Honea set up an electronic site on Blackboard to serve as a repository of all key projects students completed in their theme courses Spring 2006 through Fall 2006. Students were asked to upload electronic copies of the following items from their Theme Courses taken during AY 2005-2006: Exams; Case write-ups; Slides of presentations; Term papers; other written assignments.

The collected materials provide direct evidence on students' achievement of SLOs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1; and Goals 2 and 3. Each student's portfolio was assigned a score for each SLO (0= did not achieve, 1=moderately achieved, 2=achieved, 3=strongly achieved) and a score for Goals 2 and 3 (0= did not achieve, 1=moderately achieved, 2=achieved, 3=strongly achieved). Table 1 (attached) provides data on these scores. Overall, students achieved SLOs and Goals evaluated in the portfolio. However, the projects in the student portfolios indicated that SLO 2.1 (regarding the ability to identify and critically analyze salient legal and moral business issues) was only moderately achieved.

In addition to the committee's evaluation of the student's portfolio, each student wrote a two-page reflection regarding their assessment of whether their portfolio demonstrated achievement of Goals 2 and 3 and the associated Learning Outcomes. Echoing the "portfolio measurements" as well as the student survey results reported below, all reflections indicated that students perceived solid achievement across the Goals and SLOs. Their reflections discussed domestic and global economic issues, the technological environment, and product innovation (Goal 2, SLO 2.2 and SLO 2.3). Students did not mention analysis of salient legal and moral business issues as evidence that they had achieved the SLO 2.1 associated with Goal 2.

Student Surveys

Student surveys were administered to graduates of the College of Business MBA program during the Spring 2006 and Fall 2006 semesters. On average, about 50 students graduate each semester and the survey was completed by 36 graduates. This instrument requires that students provide feedback on their experiences in the MBA program.

As part of the survey graduates indicate how effectively they feel the program developed skills in certain domains (1=very poorly and 7=very well). Relevant domains for this report include decision tools and problem solving skills, and legal and ethical responsibilities of business professionals. As can be seen in Table 2 (attached), students feel their decision tools and problem solving skills are developed through the program; 88% report a 5 or greater and the mean response was 5.56 (SD .99). In the domain of ethical responsibilities students' ratings regarding the treatment of ethical issues and the development of skills in legal and ethical responsibility were somewhat low – only 48% and 36% of respondents, respectively,

report a 5 or greater. The mean responses were 4.43 (SD 1.70) and 4.00 (SD 1.43), respectively.

Students also rated the value or quality of specific components of the MBA Theme courses (1=added nothing and 7=added a great deal). These ratings provide an indirect measure of achievement in terms of the learning outcomes. The mean response and standard deviation for the key related questions are reported in Table 3 (attached). Overall, students feel the theme course content added to their knowledge base and professional goals. Across theme courses the mean response was greater than 4.5. Eighty percent of respondents report a 5 or greater for the Interpersonal Skills and the Environment Theme courses: mean response 5.4 (SD 1.61) and 5.16 (SD 1.50), respectively. Seventy-one percent of respondents report a 5 or greater for the Globalization Theme: mean 4.88 (SD 1.86). Sixty-three percent of respondents report a 5 or greater for the Information and Technology Theme: mean response 4.76 (SD 2.07).

III. What conclusions were drawn on the basis of the information collected?

The following conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of the data and review of the assessment process.

Analysis of Assessment Process

The students' portfolio of work is a reasonable instrument to assess student learning with regard to the Learning Outcomes listed under item I. It was possible to assess achievement at a general level from the portfolio. However, direct feedback from individual instructors on each portfolio would improve the accuracy of this assessment.

Student reflections regarding their work were limited in the depth of evaluation. Generally, students identified confirming evidence of their achievement of the SLOs and Goals and did not discuss failure to achieve in any category. The faculty assessment of the portfolios only found moderate evidence suggesting students were able to identify and critically analyze salient legal and moral business issues. Student evaluations mentioned SLO 2.1 without providing direct evidence or any specific discussion regarding how this SLO was achieved. It appears that failures or low level of achievement are not reported in student personal reflection.

Goal and SLO Achievement

The assessment results indicate that we are meeting SLOs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1. Table 1 shows that, on an overall basis (based on exams, case reports and projects) and for all of the selected MBA students, the theme classes have provided the learning tools and skills needed to achieve the aforementioned SLOs and thus meet GOALS 2 and 3. In addition, the results reported in Table 2 indicate that, based on average scores, students positively rate their overall academic experience in the MBA Theme courses.

However, there is evidence to suggest that the program could be improved in terms of enhancing students' ability to identify and critically analyze salient legal and moral business

issues. Furthermore, the information and technology theme courses have the lowest satisfaction ratings among the theme classes. This suggests potential revamping of the MBA curriculum to better address both of these issues.

IV. How will the information be used to inform decision-making, planning, and improvement?

Recommendations for the future:

- Inform the students in advance of their completion of the reflection reports as to how much data would be useful and what level of detail should be contained in the report. In particular, encourage students to incorporate (where appropriate) more constructive criticism of their work and the MBA Theme courses in their reflection reports.
- Enlist a few faculty members who teach the theme courses to evaluate the student portfolios.
- The various survey instruments should be reviewed and questions relevant to learning objectives should be modified if necessary. Many of the survey questions do not directly address learning outcomes but instead focus on student satisfaction. Survey scales should be standardized to allow comparison between responses of students completing the core courses and those graduating. Furthermore, additional questions can be included to more directly assess Goals and SLOs.
- The graduate committee, in coordination with the College of Business, should determine how to leverage the data from this report for “external visibility”: what data is valuable from this process relative to external perceptions? A summary report should be provided to the graduate student body, GBSA, enabling it to match student testimonials to the collected data. Also, student comments/suggestions offered in the surveys run by the CBA graduate committee should be compared and contrasted with those contained in the GBSA surveys.
- The overall MBA program should be reviewed and modified in order to improve the deficiencies cited in this report.

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Table 1
Faculty Evaluation of Student Achievement: Goals 2 and 3

| <u>Student</u> | <u>SLO</u> | | | <u>Goal 2</u> | <u>SLO</u> | <u>Goal 3</u> |
|----------------|------------|-----|-----|---------------|------------|---------------|
| | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | | 3.1 | |
| A | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| B | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| C | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| D | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| E | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |

Table 2
Skill Development in the MBA: Student Evaluation

| Skills Developed in MBA Program | Percentage Evaluating ≥ 5 | Mean | SD |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|
| Decision Tools and Problem Solving (SLO 2.1, 2.2, 2.3) | 88% | 5.56 | .99 |
| Treatment of Ethical Issues (SLO 2.1) | 48% | 4.43 | 1.70 |
| Developed Skills in Legal and Ethical Responsibilities of Business Professionals (SLO 2.1) | 36% | 4.00 | 1.43 |

Table 3
MBA Theme Course: Student Evaluation

| Theme Course Category | Percentage Evaluating ≥ 5 | Mean | SD |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|
| Interpersonal Skills Theme (SLO 3.1) | 80% | 5.4 | 1.61 |
| Environment Theme (SLO 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1) | 80% | 5.16 | 1.50 |
| Globalization Theme (SLO 2.2, 3.1) | 71% | 4.88 | 1.86 |
| Information and Technology Theme (SLO 2.3) | 63% | 4.76 | 2.07 |